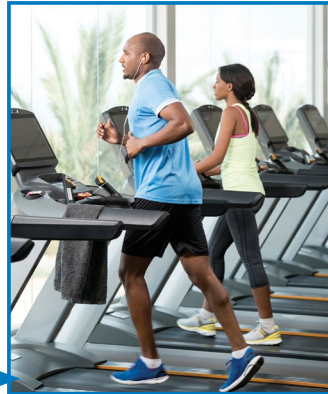


Equipped to Exercise

Cardio exercise machines offer a convenient way to help you meet the recommended exercise goals at home.* Start by reviewing the specific benefits of each type of machine. Among the most popular:

Treadmill: You can burn more calories per mile than on many other machines – about 100 per mile walking briskly. You can adjust it to different levels of speed and elevation as you gain strength.



••••• **Elliptical trainer:** With an adjustable circular up-and-down motion, it's a cross between a ski machine and a stair stepper. It's easier on your joints than a treadmill.

••• **Rowing machine:** As it works the back, arms and legs simultaneously, it offers a near total-body workout from a machine. It's not advised for people with back trouble.



••••• **Stationary bike:** This produces the least impact on your joints from a machine; it's most suitable for people with knee problems.



Read the reviews of various models. Check consumer and fitness magazines that rate cardio equipment. And consider buying used: You'll find many stores that sell quality used fitness equipment worth major savings; read user reviews.

When shopping, try out the machine as you expect to use it for at least 15 to 20 minutes. Explore the various speeds or intensity options. Choose for comfort, ease of use and daily enjoyment.

Before you buy, check with your health care provider, particularly if you have back or joint issues or other chronic health conditions.

*Guidelines recommend at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise, such as brisk walking, weekly. Segments may be as short as 10 minutes.

Safety Corner: Spring Cleaning

Take precautions with cleaning chemicals.

If you have cleaning responsibilities at work, follow safe work practices.

To protect workers from the hazards of cleaning products, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health have produced a bulletin titled **Protecting Workers Who Use Cleaning Chemicals** at www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3512.pdf.

The document addresses several subjects, including safe work practices when using cleaning chemicals.

Here's what you need to know (Many of these precautions apply at home, too.):

- Never mix cleaning products that contain bleach and ammonia.
- Know which chemicals must be diluted and how to correctly dilute them.
- Attend training and apply what you learn about the use and storage of cleaning chemicals, and about emergency spill procedures for cleaning chemicals.
- Wear the required personal protective equipment needed for each chemical, such as gloves and/or goggles. ➔ Continued on page 4.

On page 4:

- Benefit News and Notes
- Last-Minute Tax Tips



Antibiotics: Too Much of a Good Thing?

For nearly 75 years, antibiotics have saved millions of lives from infectious bacteria. But now we're using them when we don't need them – and this practice poses serious health risks worldwide: ➔ Continued on page 4.



Smart Moves Toolkit at
www.personalbest.com/extras/17V4tools

"Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together." – Vincent van Gogh

Meditation 101



Many people practice meditation to gain inner peace or to help manage medical conditions.

A few minutes of meditative concentration can produce deep mental calm and physical relaxation. In the process, blood pressure and stress hormones decrease as heart rate and breathing slow.

People also practice meditation to help relieve the physical symptoms of several conditions, including asthma, insomnia, depression, pain and cancer. The American Heart Association promotes routine meditation to potentially lower your risk of heart disease.

Basic Meditation Routine

- 1 Pick a place and time free of distractions.
- 2 Sit comfortably with your spine erect.
- 3 Close your eyes and quietly take slow, deep breaths.
- 4 Focus on your breathing or a peaceful image. Each time your mind wanders, gently bring it back. **A good learning technique is to concentrate on your breathing.**

Try to meditate 15 to 30 minutes each day – during stretching or a walk, or while falling asleep. And when you're feeling overwhelmed, brief meditation can provide a quiet break.

Health Impact of Nasal Allergies

Nasal allergy, or allergic rhinitis, leads to millions of lost work and school days and billions of lost health care dollars each year.

Whether you have seasonal allergies or year-round symptoms, the health effects can significantly impair your sleep, work, cognition and quality of life. No wonder, considering the ongoing aggravations: congestion, heavy mucus drainage and swollen nasal cavity, leading to itchy nose, eyes and ears, as well as causing drowsiness, headache, earache and other discomforts.

First line of defense: Identify and avoid your allergy triggers. Work closely with your health care provider to determine the best prevention and treatment plan.

Carbohydrate Confusion By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

When you hear the word *carbs*, do you think of white bread and potatoes? Carbohydrates are often unfairly categorized as merely starchy foods short on nutritional value.

Many foods contain carbs, including fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, lentils, dairy products, nuts and seeds. You can see from this list that taking carbs off your plate can severely limit your food choices. Instead of avoiding carbs, know which sources are most beneficial.

Most foods have a mix of the 3 main types of carbs: sugar (simple carbs), fiber and starch (complex carbs).

Sugars

Some foods, such as milk and fruit, contain **natural sugars**. Many manufactured foods have **added sugars**, including white sugar, honey, high-fructose corn syrup, molasses, etc.

Since natural sugars come bundled in healthy foods that also contain fiber and vitamins, they are less detrimental than **added sugars**, which are the least nutritious carbs. The American Heart Association recommends you **limit daily added sugars to 6 teaspoons for women and 9 teaspoons for men.** That does not include natural sugars, such as those in fruit.



Fiber

Fiber is a carbohydrate that passes undigested through your body. For good health, aim for 25 to 38 grams per day, based on your age and gender. Fiber is in:

- Vegetables and fruits.
- Whole grains such as rye, quinoa, brown rice and whole-grain wheat.
- Legumes such as lentils, chickpeas and beans.
- Nuts and seeds.



Starches

Some starches are better than others.

For example, choose:

- Brown rice instead of white rice.
- Whole-grain instead of white bread or pasta.
- Whole-grain or bran cereals instead of processed cereals.
- Skin-on instead of mashed potatoes.



Did you know?



Vegetables are carbs. Starchy vegetables such as potatoes, corn, squash and beets have more carbs than lighter vegetables, but they have fiber, vitamins and minerals. Just watch your portion size – a half-cup serving of starchy vegetables is all you need.



Secrets of Successful Networking

Networking can bring to mind conference rooms filled with people wearing name tags. Of course, networking can lead to great learning experiences and professional growth, with or without name tags.

>>Use the resources you already have. Your alumni organization, former supervisors and coworkers, and professional associations are the perfect places to start. Reach out and get in touch, or attend an event.

>>Focus on quality, not quantity. Attending huge events or having conversations with a lot of people might make you feel you are maximizing your networking potential, but economize your efforts. Clearly identify your goal: Do you want to get a new job, advance in your profession, find a mentor or make contacts for sales or hiring? Do some research, and make it a point to connect with 1 or 2 people who can help you.

>>Reciprocate. Be willing to help, make introductions, host a group or meet for coffee and conversation with someone who is just starting out. That person, in turn, could become a valuable connection for you in the future.



TIP OF THE MONTH: SPRING PRODUCE

Spring is here, which means that fresh asparagus, peas, ramps (wild leeks), fennel and fiddleheads (curled fern fronds) are here at last. Enjoy this bounty fresh from the farm. Try making a pea risotto, adding grilled fennel atop a goat cheese pizza, or adding ramps and asparagus to your next omelette.



Traveling? Don't Forget Nutrition

By Cara Rosenbloom, RD

Whether you're on a Caribbean cruise or a quick business trip to New York, you may not always eat right while you're traveling. It may be even more difficult when you're in a foreign country and language adds another barrier.

While you can't plan for every meal and snack (there's fun in vacation spontaneity), some simple foresight can help you eat well on the road:

- ✓ **Search** online to find grocery stores or food markets that are close to your hotel, and stock up on your first day.
- ✓ **Book** a room with a mini-fridge and keep nutritious snacks on hand.
- ✓ **Bring** some meal replacement bars from home so you're not hungry during long travel days. Trail mix works well, too.
- ✓ **Check** online for restaurants that interest you. When hunger strikes, you'll have somewhere to go.

Note: If you have food allergies or follow a special diet, don't hesitate to request food alternatives when dining out. Learn how to communicate your needs in the local language.



Try the 80-20 rule. Some people joke that calories don't count when you're on vacation. The reality? Long days spent enjoying all-you-can-eat buffets and sampling local sweets can add unwanted pounds and inches. Instead of an everyday indulgence, try the 80-20 rule. Plan to eat nutritious foods 80% of the time, and leave 20% for treats.

Spend your calories like money. You wouldn't spend all of your pesos or liras on cheap souvenirs. It's better to find something of value that you'll cherish. Do the same thing with every sip or bite, and you'll bring home sweet memories, without the added pounds.

LENTIL TACOS

EASY | RECIPE

From Personal Best®

1 cup brown or green lentils, sorted and rinsed
3 cups water
2 tsp olive oil
1 tbsp chili powder
2 tsp cumin
1 tsp dried oregano
½ tsp salt
12 hard taco shells
2 cups romaine lettuce or kale, shredded
2 medium tomatoes, diced
1 yellow pepper, cut into thin strips

Optional ingredients for serving: guacamole, salsa, sour cream, cilantro, green onion.

1. Bring lentils and water to boil in a large pot.
2. Reduce heat and simmer 25-30 minutes or until lentils are tender.
3. Remove from heat and mash lentils slightly.
4. Add oil, chili powder, cumin, oregano and salt.
5. Stir to combine. **To assemble:** Line bottoms of taco shells with lentil mixture. Top with lettuce, tomato, yellow pepper and optional ingredients of choice.



Makes 4 servings. Per serving (3 tacos each):

348 calories | 15g protein | 9g total fat | 2g saturated fat | 5g mono fat | 2g poly fat
0mg cholesterol | 53g carbohydrate | 0g sugar | 14g fiber | 326mg sodium

Stay in Touch

Keep those questions and suggestions coming!

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Antibiotics: Too Much of a Good Thing? ➔ Continued from page 1.

1. Antibiotics can disrupt the body's natural and essential balance of good and bad bacteria. High doses or long-term use of antibiotics makes it easier for infections, such as *C. difficile* bacteria, to grow.

C. difficile most often causes infectious diarrhea in hospital patients and people who live in long-term care facilities.

2. Overusing antibiotics breeds superbugs such as **MRSA**, an antibiotic-resistant bacteria that occurs most often in health care facilities.

Antibiotic alternatives: Work with your health care providers and become aware of smart drug use for you and your children. Ask about antibiotic alternatives that may ease symptoms.

Fight infections and contagion. Keep vaccinations current. And wash hands thoroughly and often with plain soap (non-antibacterial) and water, especially:

- **Before** preparing or eating food.
- **After** bathroom use, coughing or handling garbage.
- **After** exposure in public places, such as malls, theaters and restaurants.

Note: If soap and water aren't available, you can use hand sanitizer.

Remember, using antibiotics raises your risk of getting a resistant infection in the future. If you must use them, do so exactly as your health care provider has prescribed.

Safety Corner: Spring Cleaning ➔ Continued from page 1.

- Know how to read the labels on all containers of cleaning products and chemicals to identify content and hazards. Report containers that are not labeled, and don't use the chemicals from those containers.
- Check with your supervisor about ventilation systems that may be needed during cleaning to allow sufficient airflow and prevent buildup of hazardous vapors.
- Know where you can wash up after using cleaning chemicals.



Benefits News and Notes

Group Health Cooperative is Now Kaiser Permanente

In February 2017, Kaiser Permanente acquired Group Health Cooperative. If you are enrolled in a City Group Health plan, your 2017 benefits and coverage will not change with the acquisition. You will receive a new medical card with the Kaiser Permanente name and logo. You will also receive a welcome letter from Kaiser Permanente in early April.

The Group Health name has also changed to Kaiser Permanente throughout the system on signage, staff uniforms, web pages and all marketing materials. If you have questions, please contact Kaiser Permanente at 206-901-4636 or visit www.kp.org/wa.

Change of Status (married, divorced, adding a newborn, adoption etc.) Contact Maria Sahagun by email (maria.sahagun@seattlehousing.org) or phone **(206-615-3328)** within 30 days from when the change of status occurred. For adding a newborn child or adoption, employees have 60 days to add their new dependent to their benefits. There may be some consequences if you miss reporting your change of status within the deadlines.

Last-minute Tax Tips

Provided by Wellspring Family Services (EAP Provider)

Beware of the Alternative Minimum Tax. Do your tax calculation the "normal" way. Then run your tax data through the online IRS Alternative Minimum Tax tool, the AMT Assistant, at www.irs.gov. The results will tell you if you need to do a full AMT calculation.

Watch for changes. Don't copy numbers from last year's tax form. The standard deduction, personal exemptions, and marginal tax brackets are indexed annually for inflation.

Review your records. IRS data indicate that many people don't take legal write-offs such as union dues, job-search expenses, non-cash charitable contributions, volunteer expenses, points on a refinanced mortgage, and tax-preparation fees.

Consider an extension. If you can't finish your tax return by April 15, get a 6-month extension by filing Form 4868. You still need to pay what you owe, however. An extension is for filing only — not for payment of tax.

If you need assistance with your taxes, Wellspring EAP can connect you to the appropriate resources. Call 1-800-553-7798 or visit www.wellspringeap.org (username **Seattle Housing Authority**) and send us a referral request.

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